

LOS ANGELES TIMES
1 December 1986

'Clean House,' Key Republicans Urge

**Dole Wants Watergate-Type Inquiry;
Lugar Asks Reagan to Change Staff**

By JACK NELSON, Times Washington Bureau Chief

WASHINGTON—Senate Republican leaders warned President Reagan on Sunday that he must immediately "clean house" and make a full disclosure of the Iranian arms-and-hostages scandal if he is to retain control of his presidency.

Senate Majority Leader Bob Dole (R-Kan.) urged Reagan to call a special session of Congress so that a joint House-Senate committee could be appointed to conduct a Watergate-type investigation. And Senate Foreign Relations Committee Chairman Richard G. Lugar (R-Ind.), declaring that Reagan's foreign policy is in "shambles," said the President needs a new White House staff and may need new Cabinet members.

Staffers Agree on Urgency

Responding to an interviewer's question, Lugar did not rule out dismissing Defense Secretary Caspar W. Weinberger and CIA Director William J. Casey, as well as two officials whom some of Reagan's longtime associates reportedly have targeted for removal—White House Chief of Staff Donald T. Regan and Secretary of State George P. Shultz.

And two senior White House aides, speaking on condition they not be identified, said they agreed that the crisis gripping the Reagan presidency is so severe that he must immediately order a full disclosure and the appointment of an independent counsel to investigate the possibility that laws may have been broken.

So far, only two officials have been removed because of the scandal. Vice Adm. John M. Poindexter, who as Reagan's national security adviser directed the Iranian operation out of the White House, resigned last Tuesday, and Marine Lt. Col. Oliver L. North, a Poindexter aide on the White House National

Security Council staff, was fired.

North has been identified as the principal field operator of a program of selling arms to Iran in return for the release of American hostages held in Lebanon by Iranian-backed terrorists, and then diverting up to \$30 million of the arms sale profits to the *contras* fighting to overthrow the Marxist-led government of Nicaragua.

At least three investigations of the mushrooming controversy have already been launched.

—The Justice Department, which has brought the FBI into the case, about 10 days ago began the inquiry that revealed the link between the Iranian arms sales and the *contras*.

—A special review board named by Reagan will meet with the President and the other members of the National Security Council today as it begins its study of the NSC's operations. The panel is headed by former Sen. John Tower (R-Tex.) and includes former Sen. Edmund S. Muskie (D-Maine) and former national security adviser Brent Scowcroft.

—The Senate Intelligence Committee is expected to begin hearing testimony today.

Fears 15-20 Committees

Dole urged Reagan to call Congress into session next week to form a special committee that, apart from having members from both the House and the Senate, would function as the Senate Select Committee did during the Watergate scandal. That committee, chaired by the late Sen. Sam Ervin (D-N.C.), turned up the White House taping system and other evidence that implicated President Richard M. Nixon in a cover-up and forced him to resign.

Dole, interviewed on ABC's "This Week With David Brinkley,"

warned that if Reagan waits until January, "we're going to have 15 or 20 committees investigating this problem."

Asked about Dole's proposal, Reagan declined to commit himself. As he boarded a plane to return to Washington from his California ranch, Reagan said, "We'll do everything necessary to get at the truth, and then we'll make the truth known."

Dan Howard, a White House spokesman, said of Dole's suggestion, "It's a novel idea. We simply haven't had time to consider it."

Congress has adjourned until next month, when a new Congress will be sworn in. Only Reagan could call Congress back into session before then.

'Crisis Atmosphere'

Senate Democratic Leader Robert C. Byrd of West Virginia opposes a special congressional session, saying he favors waiting until January, when the Democrats will control the Senate. A special session of Congress, Byrd said on CBS's "Face the Nation," would only "contribute to a crisis atmosphere and would not necessarily move us toward a timely resolution of this crisis."

Byrd urged Reagan instead to instruct Atty. Gen. Edwin Meese III to seek an independent counsel to investigate whether any laws had

been broken. "The President is in trouble," Byrd said. "The presidency itself is being weakened. This thing is not going to go away by itself, and the quicker the President can take action himself and appear to be in control, the better off he will be and we will all be."

White House spokesman Howard refused to comment on the appointment of an independent counsel. "Anything we say on that," he told reporters, "will come through the Justice Department."

The attorney general can ask the federal courts to appoint an independent counsel to investigate a probable violation of law by a high Administration official or to take over an internal investigation that might raise even the appearance of a political or financial conflict of interest.

Although a Reagan confidant and longtime Meese associate has told *The Times* that a decision has already been made to seek an independent counsel, Meese has not yet announced the decision. The Justice Department's official position is that it is still in charge of the investigation and that a decision to appoint outside counsel has not yet been reached.

Lugar, appearing on NBC's "Meet the Press," insisted that Reagan must promptly "clean house of all the malefactors" in his Administration.

"I think he needs a new staff at the White House," Lugar said. "He may need new Cabinet members. He clearly needs a new National Security Council."

Asked if Casey, Shultz and Weinberger should be removed, the generally softspoken Lugar declared: "I won't get into each and every Cabinet member, but I wouldn't rule out replacing any of those. It seems to me at this point the President has to have a true new beginning, a new Administration."

Only then, Lugar said, can the Administration address its "serious foreign policy problems—in Central America, in the Middle East, terrorism across the board. We are in danger from the Soviets when they see us this vulnerable."

'Old Men' vs. 'Young Bulls'

Lugar said the White House is split between "the old men who are all defending each other and the young bulls who want to get on with it. . . . I'm with the young in this case. We'd better get on with it."

Rep. Richard Cheney (R-Wyo.), a member of the House Intelligence Committee who was White House chief of staff under President Gerald R. Ford, said he did not have enough information to know whether Regan should resign as chief of staff. But Shultz, he said in a Cable News Network interview, probably is secure.

"I think it has reached the point now where he is likely to stay," Cheney said, "partly because his reputation on Capitol Hill is a good one, partly because he's perceived . . . around the country as a fairly strong figure and did at least object to the policy that's now come under so much criticism."

Senate Intelligence Committee Chairman Dave Durenberger (R-Minn.) said his committee, which begins its investigation into the scandal today, is concerned about news reports that Poindexter and North shredded documents before leaving their jobs. He said the committee wrote the President a letter asking that he ensure that "all of the records in control of his Administration be preserved for future investigations either by our committee or any other."

The committee, Durenberger said, will spend two weeks collecting information from a variety of officials and former officials including Robert C. McFarlane, Poindexter's predecessor as the President's national security adviser. It was under McFarlane, who left office last December, that the Iranian arms sales began.

Only then, Durenberger said, will the committee decide whether to call CIA Director Casey and other Cabinet-level officials.

Times staff writers James Gerstenzang and Don Irwin contributed to this story.